Lalla-Ded-meri dreshti mai

A critique

by

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M.A. (English), M.A. (Sanskrit), M.A. (Hindi), B.Ed.

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Chapter-1

POSSIBILITIES OF LALLA DED RECONSTRUCTION

It deserves an open-hearted acknowledgement that the treasure-trove of Lalla Ded vakhs have been saved from extinction as a precious legacy by some ordinary yet exceptional individuals who kept them alive in the grooves & ridges of their memory membrane. For preservation & conservation of knowledge it has been a unique method prevalent in India for millennia. The Rigvedic mantras were preserved this way only. Some indologists of immense repute like Griffth & Monier Williams have been lavish in admiring the role of individuals with extra-ordinary memory faculty for preservation of knowledge in an ancient land like India.

Dr. Grierson, an indologist in the British Service, has rendered the Kashmiri Hindu Heritage a great favour by getting the Lalla Ded vakhs recorded from a Pandit, Dharam Das by name, through Dr. Stein & M.M. Pt.. Mukund Ram Shastri, an awesome scholar of Sanskrit lore and learning.

The vakhs as we have them in 'Lalla vakyani', despite numerous transmissions from generation to generation, do retain an archaic flavour and complexion. What the actual form of Kashmiri in the times of Lalla Ded was is a complex issue of linguistic polemics & wranglings which remains distance way from a satisfactory resolution. Bilhan, a kashmiri poet & historian living in 10th century A.D., in a morsel of information characterises the form of Kashmiri in vogue in his time as 'Desh Bhasha', but does not provide any reliable sample of it. 'Bhanasur Katha', & Mahanaya Prakash' are written in a language

form that borders on an 'apbrahmsa' with all its phonemic & phonetic characteristics. The linguistic texture of Lalla Ded vakhs appears prima facie at a divergence from the linguistic shape and form of Bhanasur Katha & Mahanay Prakash. The transformation is not far to seek. The transmission of the vakhs from individual to individual and one family to the succeeding families, it happening through generations together, wrought linguistic changes that rubbed off & stole away the archaicness of the vakhs. During the process of transmissions, additions, deletions, replacements & interpolations cannot be ruled out. One who denies it is not on firm ground of history. Despite ravages wrought by time and transmission from generation to generation, Lalla Ded vakhs in Dr. Grierson's collection do have a semblance of pristinity in word, phrase & form. The same vakhs as are available in Gopi Nath Raina's collection, Prof. Koul's & Prof. Parimoo's works on Lalla Ded do have an improvised complexion, yet are not drained off of old flavour and do not present a linguistic scenario that is so modernised that it marks a hiatus between their vakhs and those of Dr. Grierson.

How is it that Lalla Ded vakhs have stood the fury & flux of time & Nund Rishi's shrukhs have suffered a chemical transformation ? The reason, I believe, is that those who religiously preserved the vakhs of Lalla Ded & continued with their cultural transmission through succeeding generations were not driven by religious prejudices and had no hate-soaked motivations to distort & disfigure them to the level that they remained mere caricatures of their originals. If the transmitter, per chance, had vaishnavite leanings, he would interpolate his vaishnavite credos & notions into the texture of vakhs which on an analysis would not be much in disagreement with how

Lalla Ded had posed herself on issues of God, man and world.

But, contrary to Lalla Ded, the shrukhs of Nund Rishi as are available in an array of popular versions highlight him as one who is cut asunder from his cultural & civilisational roots. As a person, he is overlaid with a massive weight of fibs, fables & figments that pose him as a proselytiser, semitic in approach and precept, a sufi, not a rishi, at variance with his nativity and surrounding cultural ambience. The pristine Nund Rishi is lost. Linguistically, the shrukhs are couched in a language form that bears a modern ring and glitter and appear to have been cleansed of the dross of archaic tinge and tone, word & metaphor. Such an over-riding transmutation of shrukhs can be safely attributed to Muslim zealots who were ill at ease with his indigenous flavour & were keen to present him as a mauzzin, a preacher fully oriented to the foreign content of a 'guest faith' & more than most an iconoclast working out the behests of the Kubrawi Sayyid-sufis responsible for the first holocaust of the native Hindus of Kashmir.

My concerted opinion is that Lalla Ded vakhs as are popularly available are in satisfactorily good linguistic form and shape. Any textual appraisal & evaluation is slightly a difficult process as we do not have a written manuscript of her vakhs that could form a firm substratum for any positive attempt at improvision and quality addition. The vakhs that ring sound and genuine seem to brook no interference & the lurking fear that I harbour is that it might open the dykes for a flood of distortions & misconceptions sneaking into the brilliant store-house of vakhs forming our precious bequest. Any change if conceived on the basis of genuine scholarship has to be fully authenticated & cross-referenced. No haphazard tinkering can do. A scholar who is equipped with profound knowledge of

linguistics & textual criticism & high level of awareness of the times Lalla Ded was faced with can venture on an effort to improvise upon vakhs qualitatively, not snatch away the brilliant and thoughtful poetry they winnow out. No a priori methods can do. Internal evidence of vakhs, their thought nuances, linguistic shades & style-related flourishes alone can be the parameters to determine the authenticity & genuineness of any Lalla Ded vakhs.

RELIGIOUS CLEANSING OF LALLA DED VAKHS

I am not so complacent as to say that all is well with the world of Lalla Ded vakhs. Many available versions of Lalla Ded scholars do contain in their ouvre some such vakhs as appear at the very first sight foreign to the world-view & experiential dynamics of Lalla Ded. A host of interpolations, interventions, & insertions, deliberately executed, showcase a sinister design to damage & subvert the very native soul of Lalla Ded. The trajectory for Lalla Ded subversion was first laid out by the Kubrawi authors of Rishinamas & Noornamas who under a design made a mish-mash of Lalla Ded vakhs and Nund Rishi Shrukhs. To create a conceptual disarray Lalla Ded was given the nomenclature of an 'arifa', which in essentia collides against her status as a Shaiva yogini who as a person was deeply immersed in a quest of discovering shiva & was in an everlasting union with Him, the only source of beauteous bliss & enlightenment.

To pose Lalla Ded as a sufi is either a cunning attempt to appropriate her or to relocate her for a different identity, religious & cultural. Be it told, Sufism in Kashmir is a foreign plant & has had minimal acceptance & recognition. The brand

of sufis who entered the borders of Kashmir were literal Islamists & fanatically Sharia-oriented. Their nodding acquaintance with the Indian Vedanta & Buddhism had in no way softened their religious angularities & hard positions with respect to Jihad, Jaziya & the status of dhimmis. If characterised as a sufi, Lalla Ded is made to lose her close affinity and nexus with the cultural & civilisational ethos she happened to be a fine product of.

The ill-conceived efforts on part of literary mullahs are designed to the end of appropriating Lalla Ded through interpolating & smuggling Lalla Ded-type vakhs into the rich archive of her vakhs.

Some specimens of interpolated vakhs are :

1) Dod kyah zani yas no bane
Gamaki Jama ha valith tane
Gara gara phiras Peyam kane
Dyunthum na kanh ti panani kane

2) Tembar peyas kava no Tsajin,
Mas_ras (Mansuras) kava ahanajen gav
Shanten hanz kreya tola-mwala vajin,
Andrim gaha yeli nebar peyas.

3) Kalimay parum kalimay sarum,
Kalimay kachum Panun Paan
Kalimay Hani Hani Moyan Tourm
Ada Lalla Vachus La-makan

---

3) Ada gom molum ta zinim hal

But to be precise, the grave peril to Lalla Ded vakhs emanates from a literary organisation, a creature of constitution,

put under the charge of a 'cultural commissar' chosen & appointed by a dynasty that has aged & grown effete: He unleashed his malicious campaign way back in 1975 when at the opening ceremony of Lalla Ded Hospital he unabashedy talked of Lalla Ded's conversion to an alien faith. To his utter discomfiture an old man leaning against a staff present in the audience vociferously contradicted his absurd claims and challenged him to cite historical evidences and credible corroborations. The cultural commissaar, sallow in countenance, down in guts and tongue, quietly trod down the dias.

The same cultural commissaar, holding a seat on the dias, ventilated his hallucinatory condition of having seen Lalla Ded's grave at Bijbehara. The function where the cultural commissar is reported to have given vent to his pathological obsession was organised by Mrs. Bimla Raina for the release of her title 'Lalla Ded - meri dreshti mei'. But, despairingly, there was no pandit Jia Lal Koul, Jalali in the audience who could have rebutted his hallucinatory assertions & crazy bullying. Hopping in the political circles, the cultural commissar, is reported to have spoken almost crude nothing on Mrs. Raina's so-called work on Lalla Ded & rambled on appropriation of Lalla Ded through malicious fabrications & figmented lies. The same cultural commissar is responsible for partitioning the monolith of cultural mosaic & civilisational edifice of Kashmir through the publications issued out as Muslim Gazettes by the cultural organisation operating on naked sectarian lines.

Yet, I am fortified in my conviction that all malicious attempts made by different brands of cultural commissars & pseudo-historians straddling the portals of academia at religious cleansing of Lalla Ded will not fructify. Lalla Ded as a cultural & civilisational sentinel is impregnable. Her

tremendous quest for Shiva, her luminous state of being one with Shiva's supreme consciousness, her experiential fire and fury, her spontaneous flow & cascading expression can comfortably edge out all bogus interpolations & spurious replacements.

Chapter-2

MRS. BIMLA RAINA - A POET OF FANTASY

Mrs. Bimla Raina is a poet & writes Lalla Ded dressed vakhs. Two of her poetical collections 'Resh Malun Meon' & 'Veth Macha Shyongith' are available in print. Without commenting on the poetic quality of her vakhs I would just say that poetry or any form of literature is and has to be contemporary. A poet who breathes & lives in the milieu of 21st century & evinces obsessive concern about irrelevant themes cannot escape the epithet of a regressive shut up in a canary island where he like a bright, yellow finch atop a perch sings his own tuneful song. Lalla's poignancy, her moral & spiritual grandeur and exceptional assertion to be her own self amidst raging storms of religious bigotry should have mightily sensitised her to the burning themes of her personal uprootment, mass expulsion of her tribe, alientation, de-humanisation of camp-dwellers & cultural onslaught & effacement.

As a poet of live sensibilities her vakhs should have been soaked in the dark shades of a funeral song when brutal Muslim crusaders, Jihadis in Islamic parlance, perpetrated atrocious barbarities & inhuman cruelties on Kashmiri Pandit women like Sarla Bhat, Girija Tiku, Rupawati & a host of women for the simple sin that they were Hindus and had stuck to their faith tenaciously. Her vakh should have burst out into a shrill shriek when Muslim marauders, cruel and brutal, arsoned her parental abode, a veritable mansion, at Anantnag & has been lying in charred ruins. The pathetic eclipse of human values & brutal rise of medieval barbarism at her native place, resh malun to her, do not have any thematic value and relevance for her poetic out-pourings. Acrid hatred and religious intolerance enveloping

& encasing Kashmiri society do not vibrate within the orbit of her perceptions. As a bruised & traumatised soul languishing in the agonies of exile & banishment I urge Bimla Ji 'to go out of the house into the convulsions of the world, out of history into history and awful responsibility of the time.'

To quote Bretcht - could there be singing in dark times / yes, there will be singing of dark times.

When Lalla Ded resonantly sang out her vakhs, she was in complete harmony with the spirit of the times. Her vakhs, thoughtful, intense and esoteric in import, are creative 'statements of spiritual experiences, lived and felt and guides to that experience'. As the epitome of indigenous ethos, Lalla is all embracing, coherent & sweeping, profusely exuding unflinching confidence and deep sense of pride in her heritage and identity. Irrigating the fields of Rishi-ethos with its roots embedded in the Vedic Age Lalla Ded sharpened the cleavage between a tolerant and catholic ethos and a heresy-hunting creed. She fined-tuned her thought when others were sharpening their weapons of force and coercion. In sharp defiance of what was alien she renewed a new force of humanism that was inherent in the indigenous ethos. She soars into the 'invisible worlds', it is from the earth she soars. Lalla Ded is great and is stunningly creative.

Chapter-3

LALLA DED - MERI DRESHTI MEI

Mrs. Bimla Raina's another book 'Lalla Ded-meri dreshti mei' is said to be the Hindi variant of her Kashmiri book - 'Lalla Ded-myani nazri manz'. As the grape-vine has it, an urdu version of the same book is under preparation across the Bannihal Tunnel. In absence of the original & its urdu version my critique will focus on the Hindi variant that contains call it a preface by Mrs. Raina and an introduction by Dr. B.L. Koul, a retired professor of Hindi of Kashmir University.

In her pre-face Mrs. Raina makes an astounding statement that Lalla Ded being a yogini par excellence should be appraised beyond the parameters of 'panth', 'Jati, sampradai' or even the world-view that she has assiduously cultivated & garnered. This, in sum, means to denude her of biographical terrain- her persona, her vicissitudes in mundane life, her trajectory of cultural up-bringing & her arduous struggle to recognise her spiritual destiny. To me, it is a non-literary statement aimed at stripping away Lalla Ded of her identity, personality & tremendous grasp of the delicacies of thought to which as a superb poet she was wedded to. 'Know the person behind the book' is a platitude not to be overlooked.

If Mrs. Raina's parameters for literary evaluation, per chance, were applied to John Milton, Dr. Iqbal, Sant Tulsi Das & a host of greats, they, I believe, will get faded into nullity.

Dr. B.L. Koul is all plaudits for Mrs Raina, who, he opines, has given him a book on Lalla Ded resuscitation as per the canons of textual criticism & linguistics. I am afraid I may be dubbed as impolite when I debunk the claims of Dr. Koul & say that Mrs. Raina's work is ten leagues away from textual criticism &

linguistics. I would have felt highly obliged had Dr. Koul informed the wide circle of Lalla Ded scholars & lay readers about Mrs. Raina's personal achievements & expertise in the regimes of textual criticism and linguistics, two highly specialised fields.

DR. GRIERSON'S LALLA - VAKYANI

As recorded by all Lalla Ded Scholars, most of them of eminence, the fact about Lalla Ded Vakhs remains that Dr. Stein of the Rajtarangini fame, & Maha-mahopadyay Pandit Mukund Ram Shastri, Director of Research, J&K Government, recorded the vakhs from a Kashmiri Pandit living at Gushi, now destroyed by the Muslim marauders, at the behest of Dr. Grierson. Having put the repertoire of vakhs to his incisive & clinical scrutiny, Dr. Grierson published them under the title 'Lalla Vakyani' along with his comprehensive introduction & explanatory notes for which sufficient & copious aid-materials were supplied to him by Dr. Stein & Maha-mahopadyay Pt. Mukund Ram Shastri, his two close associates. What I want Dr. Koul to make note of is that the remarkable Pandit of Gushi had received the vakhs of Lalla Ded set in a sequence by way of cultural transmission & as a man gifted with uncommon memory he had carefully preserved the repertoire on the slate of his memory. The vakhs which the Pandit recited, declaimed or uttered in presence of two eminent scholars were in no way from any written manuscript. So, the vakhs as published by Dr. Grierson cannot be taken as a recension of the Lalla Ded Vakhs. Because of immense popularity of Lalla Ded as a shaivite visionary & practitioner, there were many Kashmiri Pandit families that had received & preserved her vakhs as a cultural bequest & with the

advent of printing press some pious Pandits in an admirable effort got them published in vernacular with good translations and explanations of the vakhs. So, all such collections too cannot be taken as recensions of Lalla Ded Vakhs.

METHODOLOGY OF TEXTUAL CRITICISM

The methodology of textual criticism comes into play when a number of manuscripts or published recensions of a particular work are available & an expert with profound grounding in the language & script of the manuscripts or their published variants establishes the authenticity of the work, its language, its content & context & any insertions & changes if made to fill in the moth-eaten spaces on the basis of a comparative study. What is of prime importance is the well-founded awareness & knowledge of the methodology of comparative study of manuscripts & that is the recognised gate-way to sift & sieve the chaff of insertions & interpolations from the grain of authentic content and linguistics of a particular work. The methodologies worked upon by Dr. Stein, Dr. Ved Kumari Ghai, Prof. Nila Kanth Gurtu & Prof. Sri Kanth Koul to determine the authentic texts of Rajtarangini, Nilmatpuran, Paratrimshika & Jonraj's version of Rajtarangini are instructive in this behalf. It has to be thoroughly understood that it is not & cannot be the job of a callow mind.

SILENCE ABOUT THE BASIC MANUSCRIPT

The method employed for linguistic & textual retoration of Lalla Ded Vakhs by Mrs. Raina in her book is both puzzling and mind-boggling. she has not made it known as to which manuscript, ancient or modern, she takes as the baseline for

making rapacious forays into the vakhs that are available in various versions. It is possible she might have chanced upon some such manuscripts as Dr. Koul informs the lay and the learned that she has scoured vast swathes of the country in search of research materials for her illuminating work. Dr. Koul or the author herself should have made a definitive mention of it so that a treacherous critic could have acquired, if not so, at least critically scrutinized the manuscripts to assess their authenticity and genuineness or just to check their credentials & worth.

SEVENTY-NINE VAKHS - HANDLED - MISHANDLED

Mrs. Bimla Raina has treated seventy-nine Lalla Ded Vakhs in all. She has quoted versions of the same vakhs as are found in the two brilliant works on Lalla Ded by Prof. Jaya Lal Koul & Prof. B.N. Parimoo. She has not missed to draw upon Dr. Grierson who has included 108 Lalla Ded vakhs in his collection of 'Lalla Vakyani'. Then, we are given Bimla Raina-branded Lalla Vakhs, of course, with explanations & interventions she has the temerity to make & references galore to Prof. Koul's & Prof. Parimoo's versions of the Vakhs.

VAIN ATTEMPT TO RE-ORIENTATE VAKHS

As an ardent student of Lalla Ded vakhs I feel that Mrs. Raina has not made an in-depth study of Lalla Ded vakhs & more than most, the two classical works on Lalla Ded by Prof. J.L. Koul & Prof. B.N. Parimoo. For reasons unknown she has not tried to know & understand the comparative methodology to arrive at changes she is keen to introduce in the text of vakhs. What exposes her immaturity as a critic is that she has not left even the brilliant vakhs without staining them and I am compelled

to say that she is not even remotely conversant with the Shaiva world-view & praxes & their divergence from other strands of philosophical stipulations & practices. The type of vakhs she has framed after cynical changes are not authentic in any wise.

Once tamperings are made, she has not cared a wee bit to weigh whether those are organically in sync with the body & soul of the vakh or jell with it. Her out of context insertions appear as anti-bodies in the texture of the vakhs. To my dismay, I could not find a single tampering, tinkering or replacement that could be considered relevant or genuine to the context & tenor of the vakh. I am flumoxed by the manner she splits a word & constructs new words that are far-fetched & not relevant to the spirit of the vakh. Mrs. Raina is a word-splitter & with such skill at her disposal the vakhs she has structured detract verbal music, tone & tenor, context & structure of the original vakhs that are available in various versions of Lalla Ded vakhs. Whatever interventions she has tried to introduce, one must not hesitate to say, are, on the whole, superfluous, shoddy & crude.

FAILURE TO APPRECIATE LALLA DED AS A POET

As Bimla Ji happens to be a poet she should have appreciated that Lalla Ded is not only a Shaiva yogini, but also an immaculate poet. She has dexterously objectified her mystical experiences & spiritual impulses, though subtle & nebulous, through the flavour of her mother-tongue. She is suggestive in her expression & artistic in poetic ornamentation. Through simile, metaphor & apt word she has woven the mosaic of her vakhs that have a magical effect and prismatic charm. Her bold & concrete images drawn from ware of life are

creatively vehicled to suggest the grandeur of her thought founded on a robust theoretical background. The vakhs are not designed to expatiate the categories of Shaiva thought which like all thought architectures are dry as bare bones, but they vibrate to ventilate her bitter moments of life, spiritual yearnings, deep sense of quest, joys and sorrows of an existing individual & celebrate her elevation to the status of a recognised soul. Hers is an immortal voice that gives spiritual succour & strength to amply authenticate human condition. The intrinsic cosmic force of her vakhs is the raison detre for the resilient survival of Lalla Ded as a yogini & poet through ravages of time & choppy waves of religious bigotry. She is home-spun like a shawl. 'Mystical lark' as an apt coinage of Prof. B.N. Parimoo does illustrate what essential Lalla Ded is. As an ace poet she touches our tender hearts, enlarges our perceptual field & horizon & uplifts us to a luminous state of self-recognition.

HINDI TRANSLATION OF DISTORTED VAKHS

The Vakhs that Mrs. Raina has framed through her fanciful tinkerings are an ersatz of the vakhs that do carry a deep imprint of Lalla Ded signature. As the vakhs are despairingly dwarfed and impaired, their translation into Hindi by Dr. B.L. Kaul has diminished in a large measure Lalla Ded's literary, philosophical & civilisational stature and prominence.

It is an established fact in literary criticism that poetry suffers serious losses in translations. The poetry in one language if translated into any other linguistic idiom loses its lyricism, tone and tenor, syntax & structure. The losses are inestimable when the original content as matter of translation has been subverted. A scholar like Dr. Koul has chosen to translate such

subverted contents into Hindi, the national language, for a wider circle of Hindi readers. It is quite natural that his translation of subverted vakhs will equally be subverted & hence can no longer contribute to the renaissance of Lalla Ded on a broader cultural swathe of the country. No cultivated student of literature could have afforded to ignore the brilliant & focused translations of Prof. J.L. Koul & Prof. B.N. Parimoo who have successfully resurrected Lalla Ded into the linguistic nuances & culture of an alien tongue through their skill and grasp of the contents. It is amazing how Dr. Koul has missed to fathom that Mrs. Raina has not studied the vakhs 'inferentially, analytically and critically' and has just skimmed, filleted & cherry-picked some vakhs to stud them with her immature insertions and tinkerings without dilating on solid references to reinforce the changes that she has stipulated & executed.

AAYAYI VANIS TA GAYI KANDARAS

Came she to a grocer, went she to a baker

A Constructed Myth

I feel really anguished when I write that Mrs. Bimla Raina is blissfully ignorant of the seminal historical developments in Kashmir. She is a psychological dupe to a myth, a figment & a prejudiced account as enshrined in the supercilious 'cultural construct' that she has unnecessarily chosen to refer to .

The foreign brand of Sayyid-sufis from Hamadan, Gilan & other urban areas of Persia, who entered Kashmir for conversionary activities during the rule of Muslims were essentially colonisers in their approach & premis. To achieve their ends in Kashmir they conceived and devised all unholy strategies to downgrade the natives and their cultural &

civilsational hall-marks. As Muslims had captured state power, the Sayyid-sufis, though central Asian in their origins, but thoroughly semitised, considered political power as the sure base for propagation of their foreign faith. Acting out their role as political ideologues & religious proselytisers they manipulated their access to the seats of political power through cryptic & unworthy methods & instilled the spirit of crusade (Jihad) as a matter of religious duty in the mindscape of Muslim rulers. A notable sayyid-sufi from Hamdan delineated a lurid blue-print for the total annihilation of the natives & the same was given in the form of a fiat to the Muslim ruler for an immediate execution. As candidly detailed out in the Rajtaragini of Jonraj & History of Kashmir of Hasan, to mention only a few, the Muslim rulers at the sheer instigation & prodding of the foreign brand of Sayyid-sufis embarked upon the sinister path of destroying the cultural & civilisational signs and symbols of natives.

To write the full script of genocide, the Muslim rulers forcibly converted the Hindus, demolished & arsoned the gigantic temples, molested & set afire the penance-grooves of indigenous rishis & replicating their Muslim history burnt books or dumped them into wells and other water bodies.

To justify the aggression and holocaust the Sayyid-sufis operating in consonance with the Muslim state power abominably demonised the native Hindus as animists, polytheists & heretics. They did not fail to harness colonial anthropology as a weapon to denigrate, humiliate & dominate the natives who had generated a sense of absolute inferiority in the psychic-frame of the orthodox Sayyid-sufis through their ouvre of monumental works on all segments of human knowledge and their cultural grandeur as manifested in gargantuan temple structures.

As Lalla Ded was a living Hindu Icon, fibs & fables, flippant & irreverent, were artfully forged to denigrate her as an ascetic wandering semi-nude through lanes, bylanes & thorough-fares of Kashmir. 'Aayayi vanis ta Gayi Kandaras' is one such fib that highlights the hateful perception of the foreign immigrants about the subjugated natives as denizens of a gulag.

The fib relates :-

Lalla Ded was wandering aimlessly on a road leading to the town of Shopian. Observing a man coming from that direction she is said to have yelled that she was seeing a man first time in her life. So, being nude or semi-nude, she hithered & thithered for shelter to cover her body. Having entered a grocer's shop for a shred of cloth, she left it in a huff & headed hastily towards a baker's shop. Finding the lid away from the blazing oven, she plunged into it and after a while is said to have emerged from the burning oven dressed in celestial robes.

Implicit in the fib is the colonial anthropology that Lalla Ded symbolising the religious & spiritual personality of the natives was a half-dressed tribal of the stone age roaming about unmindful of her normal requirement of wrapping her body. Prior to her having a meeting with the foreign fugitive she was required to robe herself as per the decent ethical demands. Being a foreigner the fib extols him as the only alpha male & the whole species of natives decrepit and deficient in potency. Overlay the fib with a spiritual veneer, it is interpreted that the foreigner was an apotheosis of high spirituality who entered an area of darkness where people were only at a primitive level & needed the light of spirituality, besides shreds of cloth to wrap their bodies with.

In his classical work on Lalla Ded Prof. Koul has not missed to mention this derogatory myth, but has given it an

amazing historical twist. Possessed of a scintillating intellect & historical awareness, Prof. Koul records that at the sight of a foreigner Lalla Ded plunged into the blazing fires of an oven & emerged robed in celestial raiment reminding the 'mardi kamil' about his clandestine escape from his native land to avoid fire-test instituted for him and his whole tribe by Timur, a Muslim ruler and establishing her own credentials as an accomplished lady of spiritual powers capable of braving the same fire-test with her bodily frame intact and unimpaired.

Historically, as per the Muslim chronicle, Baharistan-i-Shahi, the Sayyid-sufi, extolled as the 'mard-i-kamil', is responsible for the destruction of the Kali Temple in the heart of Srinagar & issuance of death-warrant against the natives if they dared flout any of the twenty conditions delineated for the kafirs to abide by.

Mrs. Raina should have researched the myth with a view to understanding the derogration & denigration implicit in the fib floated by the foreign colonisers for consumption of the mass of neo-converts & expressed her vociferous detestation against such a snooty & zenophobic construction now deeply etched on the wounded psyche of the statistical Muslims.

As a master of de-constructing a word by split method, she has fragmented 'kandur', baker, into 'kah andar' leaving the Lalla Ded readers in reeling consternation. 'Vanis', grocer & Kandur, baker are hyphenated to convey all in the myth . If kandur is broken into 'kah andar, inside the eleven, if she means the same, vanis, grocer, demands a Bimla Jian split to create an artificial and tenuous nexus. The entire myth or fib deserves whole hog rejection without giving it legitimacy or credence in any form.

Chapter-4
SAMPLE SURVEY OF MRS. BIMLA RAINA'S FIDDLINGS

Aami pana sodras navi.....

Vakh72

Aami pana is replaced by omapana. All Hindus from north to south of India know that Om is a bija mantra and a seeker meditates upon it for final bliss of unity. When initiated into the spiritual instrumentality of Om, a seeker is all blithe & has no reason to be in despair & dejection. His groping for a beacon to lead him onto the highway of shiva ceases. He knows the key and hence is upbeat with joy. He has only to work out the bija mantra with effort and dedication.

Replacement of 'ami pana' by 'om pana' mars the entire tone and tenor of the vakh.

Shiva va Keshava va jin va .....

Vakh 70

The well-known word Jin is tinkered with. It has been de-constructed into 'ya zi', which is ridiculous. Jina is a name in vogue for Mahavir & Buddha. It is a fact that Jainism had no stint in Kashmir, but Buddhism had a protracted history in our motherland and has left a profound imprint on the intellectual & spiritual thought-scape of Kashmir. It is equally known that Buddhism was the essential motivational force for the Shaivite thinkers to mould their thought & yogic praxes.

Jina is the pali version of Sanskrit word Jita which refers to Buddha as one who has conquered his external senses.

Then, again, bhava ruja stands replaced by bhava raj. Ruj is derived from Sanskrit word 'ruja' meaning disease. The word has been thoroughly discussed by Prof. Koul in all its ramifications. He refuses & rightly so to accept its meaning as

disease for the valid reason that Shaivism is all through a philosophy of affirmation. His translation & explanation of the word 'bhava-ruj' is sickness of the world caused by duality.

The last line of the vakh is musical, lyrical & lilting & has been replaced by a line that is ponderous, boring & lost to music.

Lalla had a tremendous theoretical grounding in the subtleties of Shaiva non-dualism. But she has not exposited Shaivite theories in her vakhs. She is a yogini, a practitioner, who had her spiritual journey. She is a superb poet too & knows to chisel words to objectify her intense experiences. Lalla Ded is not Abhinavgupta, somanand or utpaldev.

She makes a frequent use of the word 'shuniya' which actually has come to the shaivites as a legacy from Buddhism. But, they have incorporated the word for conceptualisations at variance with its Buddhist shade of semantics.

Goran dopnam kunnuy vachun.....

Vakh 15

The word vachun has been replaced by vakhchun. Why ? What necessitates the replacement ? Textual criticism does not mean a whimsical change. Vachun is directly drawn from Sanskrit and has suffered a pronunciational change in Kashmiri. The word vakhnai is a modern coinage from Sankrit word 'Vyakhya' and is a word with different connotation.

Vakhchun is also a heavier word than vachun and clogs and disrupts the harmony of the vakh.

The replacement of the expression 'nanguy nachun' by 'nihanguy nachun' is beyond normal comprehension. Explaining the meaning of the coinage in Hindi, one wonders whether a dance is footed with a help or a crutch. Can such a dance ever be called a dance ? Dance is the art of a beautiful blend of

movements, gestures and expressions. Spontaneity defines a dance.

As Lalla Ded could never have thought of literally dancing naked in a conservative society of the 14th century, there is certainly a need to look for a suggestive meaning which in sanskrit aesthetics is called 'dwaniyatmac arth'. Lalla Ded is provided with a key to spirituality by her preceptor, so she is all joy and song, hilarious & rapturous. 'Nanguy nachun' symbolises her condition of 'awareness come to her' and extreme mirthfulness. As Lalla Ded had a sufficient background of Sanskrit language, she has used the word 'nanguy', drawn directly from Sanskrit 'nagan' in the sense of 'yatharth rupen', sachmuch' in Hindi, 'pazikinyn' in Kashmiri.

In Sanskrit aesthetics an example like 'gangayam ghosa' typies what suggestive meaning is. There can be no village in the Ganges which is ever in flux. So, a new nuance of meaning is to be divined when the two layers of meaning, sanketic and lakhshanic, fail to communicate a meaning. With the help of suggestive meaning 'gangayam ghosha' conveys that there is a village on the shores of the Ganges'.

Diva vata divar vata.....

Vakh 35

The words 'divar vata' is replaced by dehvar vata & 'pyatha buan' is invested with a far-fetched meaning of 'sky & earth'. 'Hoota Bata' is strangulated into 'hyata ba hatha'. All this is word Jugglery.

Had comparative study of the vakh been done, it would have become lucid clear that the text of the said-vakh is identical in Dr. Grierson's version and that of Prof. Kaul's & Prof. Parimoo's versions. The changes that have been fancifully invented cannot be imposed on the texture of the vakh.

Lalla Ded was well-versed in Shaivism and she was aware that formal worship outside the 'self' of man was nothing but duality. The key given to her as the primary lesson was to turn her gaze inwards and Shiva was there in the confines of her microcosmic body. So idol and temple made of one material could not be of any relevance to her search within. Her exhortation to the foolish Pandit is to synchronise his mind and vital airs if he is keen to know his real nature, his self disguised by not-self.

'divar vata' can never be changed into 'dehvar vata'. The former has a clear-cut meaning of a temple stone and is still known as 'divar kany'. 'Hoota batta' is cruelly de-constructed for a distant import of 'be determined to'

If the said vakh had been recited after the execution of the stipulated changes, the disharmony & musical banality of the vakh along with losses of meaning should have definitely been sensed.

Voth ranya archun sakhar.....

Vakh 16

This vakh contains three Sanskrit words having definite meanings. It is categorically said that 'rany' is no word in Sanskrit nor does it have a form in Apbrahmsa. The word 'rany' is derived from Sanskrit word 'raghni'. 'Al', 'pal' & 'vokhur' have been invested with meanings that are far-fetched & demonstrate ignorance. 'Al' and 'pal' are Sanskrit words meaning wine and flesh. Vakhur means a slice of bread.

Lalla Ded was fully aware of the kaula practices prevalent in her native land which did not exclude physical enjoyments for purposes of higher ascension.

Keeping in view the overall import of the first three lines of the vakh Prof. Parimoo's version of the fourth line is quite appropriate. He has also given an alternate text of the fourth

line of the quatrain citing the anonymous manuscript lying in the Research Library, Srinagar.

An attempt has been made to introduce a variant of the last line of the vakh. It does not sound relevant when the import of the first three lines has been mish-mashed.

Nabad baras atagand dyul gom.....

Vakh 17

Bimla Ji, I believe, is bereft of aesthetic sense as she has absolutely failed to appreciate the vakh as a gem in the rich archive of Lalla Ded vakhs. She should have left it unpolluted in view of its exquisite poetry. But, perhaps, keen to win kudos from inepts, she has picked up a word vanun, only to fragment it into 'vyan na yun'. Can it be asked if it is a poetic expression and again if it is germane to the context of the vakh ? The word 'vanun' refers to the preceptor's fundamental initiation that seems to have disillusioned her about the manner of life she had been living and even her notions about spiritual way of life. The entire vakh conveys that Lalla Ded is on cross-roads.

Vakh manas kol akol na ate.....

Vakh 01

The entire vakh stands distorted, nay, destroyed if the changes wrought are incorporated in the body of the vakh. 'kol' & 'akol' are translated as 'vakhat' and 'be-vakhat', 'samai' & 'ku-samai'. 'Vakh' & 'manas' are translated as 'mansika japa'

Be it told that the above meanings are not relevant to what Lalla Ded wants to pour out. 'Kol' & 'akol' are two recognised terms in Kashmir Shaiva non-dualism. 'Kol' implies expansion, prasar, & 'akol' means 'transcendental shiva', Shiva in equipoise. In Shaiva yoga, the two terms underline the seat of Shakti at muladhar and sahasrar, the seat of shiva respectively. 'Vakh' means gross word, speech &

'manas' means chita' - the limited thought.

Lalla ba drawyas lol re.....

Vakh 03

The explanations given for the stipulated changes are misplaced. The fact remains that Lalla Ded had been in quest & in deep pain & anguish too as she was yearning to know the key to attain the blissful state of identity with Shiva. Then a time came when it dawned upon her that Shiva was within her own bosom & there was no need to wander about in His search. That time or moment was both momentous & auspicious for her.

To establish the misplaced notion about the vakh 'ba drayas' has been crucified into 'bodhi ayas' & 'lol re', a highly lyrical expression, has been convoluted into 'lol hure'. The changes wrought are not necessitated by the internal needs of the vakh & then do not sit well on the soul of the vakh.

Asi pondi gosi zami.....

Vakh 50

For tinkering 'asi' has been cherry-picked and 'pondi', 'zosi' & 'zami' have been left as they stand in the original vakh. As willed under a whim, 'asi' has been related to a yogic praxis, a-oose. What about other human acts like sneezing, coughing & yawning ? What is the connect of 'a-oose' with other acts left outside the realms of yoga ? It is a big incongruity.

Another word from the vakh chosen for crucifixion is 'par-zantan'. Dr. Grierson's text of the vak has the same word and Prof. Koul's & Prof. Parimoo's text of the vakh retain the same reading of the word. The word 'par-zantan' carries an archaic hue and it is replaced by the word 'praznautan', modernised linguistic form of the said-word.

Lalla Ded in the vakh conveys that all acts of laughing, sneezing, coughing & yawning are the acts of Shiva who through

his 'Swatantrya Shakti' assumes the form of an anu, a jiva, a limited being.

The Shaiva thought stresses that certain intense moments like laughing, sneezing et al can be synergised with one-pointedness for uplift to a state of unicity with Shiva, the absolute . In his monumental work, Shiva Dreshiti Somanand refers to such intense moments as can have tremendous spiritual efficacy.

Buthi kyah jan chuk vonda chuy kani.....

Vakh 49

The vakh is spurious & does not form a part of Lalla Ded archive of vakhs . Yet the fiddling as a reflex act of the lady has taken its toll. This vakh is available in the version of vakhs that is published by the State Academy that works out the ill-design of decimating the pristine Lalla Ded with all her intrinsic genius and worth.

The word-hoard of the said-vakh is most modern & its content is lacking in the passion & fury of Lalla. For kanya Lalla Ded has used 'vata' & 'shila' & 'asal' is no word in her spiritual parlance.

kyah kara panchan dahan ta kahan.....

Vakh 32

Topsy-turvying the recognised meanings of 'five', 'ten' & 'eleven', five have been taken for five bonds of attachment, ten for ten nadis & eleven for five motor senses & five cognitive sense perceptions + manas.

But, the recognised meanings in Shaiva thought for five is five tattvas, ten for five motor senses + five cognitive sense perceptions & eleventh is the antakaran (mann, budhi & ahankar).

For purposes of de-constructing words, 'vokshun' & 'samahan' have been picked out. 'Vokshun' is split up into

'voha-akhyun' and 'samahan' is manipulated to the form of 'samatahan'. After the first change has been affected, the verse-line stands translated into - 'all the above tattvas, senses & mind have destroyed the body.'

Be it firmly told, the Shaiva thought has no ideological reference that focuses on the destructive role of tattvas, senses & mind. Its emphasis is to synergise everything in the human body to achieve the end product of self-recognition (pratibijjna).

'Samatahan' is considered apter than 'samahan'. why & how ? 'Samatahan' disrupts the flow of the verse line & the entire effect of the vakh. Rhyme & rhythm are known virtues of all forms of poetry.

In the last line 'kahan' has been cynically changed into 'kohan' without mulling over the relevance of it to the whole-grain semantics of the vakh. Lalla conveys that 'spiritual cow' would not have been lost if all the material tattvas constituting the body, sense-perceptions & mind had acted in unison & absolute concordance.

Imai shey che timia shey meya.....

Vakh 28

As Lalla Ded was an initiated Shaiva yogini the 'six' that she refers to are the six attributes of Param Shiva. His attributes are - Omniscience, contentment, absolute self-sufficiency, knowledge of the past eternity, irreducible potency & Omnipotence. The 'jiva' has all these attributes, but are stained with limitation. His attributes as jiva are kala, niyati, raga, vidya, kala & maya.

Like Dr. Grierson, Bimla ji in imitation has extended the scope of six to include six seasons, six stages & six vikaras.

But, it is an erosion of the Shaiva thought. Six attributes the jiva has come to him from Shiva who through his 'swatantrya

shakti' has assumed the form of a jiva. Jiva is shiva and shiva is jiva. But the attributes of Shiva are absolute & the attributes of Jiva are limited in scope & extent. Therefore, the extended scope of six to include six seasons, six stages & six vikaras are not the attributes of Shiva, the absolute, but are the attributes of a Jiva tainted with limitations. The additions to the list of limitations are based on succession & vikaras. But Param Shiva is meta-succession & meta-vikaras.

'Shyam gala' is chosen for crucifixion. Declaring it meaning-less and absurd, its womb is ripped open for 'shyami agola' to emerge, meaning 'six that does not melt'. It is poor and pathetic and does not deserve analysis.

'Shyam gala' conveys its meaning to all who are Hindus.

The word 'tatith' is certainly derived from Sanskrit. But, it is not derived from 'tadan'. It owes its origin to the Sanskrit word 'tikht' meaning bitter, sore, difficult & even miserable.

Mala Vondi Zolum, Jigar Moraum .....

Vakh 24

The said vakh is resonant & poignant with the intense yogic praxes that Lalla Ded had subjected herself to drain off the malas (dirts) that wrapped her microcosmic frame as an anu. As per Shaiva tenets the three malas (dirts) are -anavamal, karma mal & mayiya mal. Her spiritual achievements through intense yogic praxes had invested her with the spiritual chuzpah to claim that she earned a name after she resigned herself to Shiva's shakhtipat (grace). 'Anava-mal' cannot be removed through human effort and for it a seeker has to seek for Shiva's shaktipat (grace).

In this vakh a word like 'dalya' is netted to tear it to shreds. Lalla Ded has expressed her sense of resignation through 'dalya' & keen to meddle Bimla Ji analyses singular & plural form of it.

Poets do enjoy a liberty called 'poetic license'

Hachiva Harinji petsiv kan gom.....

Vakh 31

It is gem of a vakh in the treasure-trove of Lalla Ded vakhs. Lalla Ded bemoans her lot as she feels all helpless-none coming to bail her out of the mire she is steeped in. A wooden bow with pithless weed-made arrows, an unwise carpenter to shape the palace of her mind, a lock-less shop in the market place & her body wihout a ritual bath are culled together to frame her despondent condition. The vakh drenched in despair & angst implicity conveys that she has not been ably initiated & guided for the spiritual under-taking by an adept preceptor.

Not appreciative of the subtle content of the vakh, Bimla ji as per her manner forks out 'abakh chan', 'Razdane', tirathros pan' & turns & twists them for word-forms that appear queer and incredible.

'Razdane' is Lalla's own microcosmic frame which is the abode of her own 'self'. It has been twisted into 'ras-dwane'. The cue, perhaps, for the change seems to have come to her from some raw mind, who has come across the word 'rasdwani', which in Indian aesthetics has an exalted sense & meaning. With 'ras dwane' as replacement the tenor of the vakh goes upside down. 'Abak chan' is deconstructed & invented into 'abodi chyan' causing a hiatus in her mood of exhilaration. 'Tirath ros.....' is squeezed to eke out 'titha pan ras gom' and 'mali' is mutilated into 'moal', value in English.

The said vakh after strangulation of Lalla's apt words and metaphors is translated into Hindi conveying entirely absurd import & discordant notes.

Zanha nadi dal mann ratith.....

Vakh 22

Splitting 'Zanha' into 'zan yee ha' & 'kruth' into 'kiva Ishto', word-tearing touches its height. And it has been acclaimed as linguistic study.

After incorporating unpoetic changes the version of the vakh conveys a sense quite at variance with the original vakh couched in beautiful poetry & ornamentation.

Lalla Ded would have come to know the methodology of preparing the alchemy of yoga for attainment of unity with Shiva, had she known to manage & control her fickle mind and nerve-plexi & also to tear, collect & pulverise the tuft of klesas. Her counsel is that with all such knowledge at one's disposal, Shiva is still difficult to be accessed. She mentions the 'klesas' in the vakh for the fact that they do cause a disturbance during the process of awakening the Kundalini. Such remains the crux of the vakh.

Through word-tearing & inept inventing of new & strange word-forms the magnetic poetry of the vakh has been impaired and mutilated.

Kalimai parum ta kalimai sarom.....

Vakh 77

The vakh has been interpolated into the repository of Lalla Ded vakhs and is available in the version of vakhs published by the state cultural academy.

It is not in consonance with the essential spirit of Lalla Ded, her Shaivite culture & Shaivite yoga praxis. 'Om' & 'aham' are her bija mantras that have acted as her beacon during the course of her spiritual journey for 'self-recognition' and 'one-ness' with Shiva.

The vakh is not only spurious, but apochryphal too. Any attempt to change the first word in the so-called vakh into any other word of 'Bija-mantra' is rejected and has no meaning.

Moodo Krai chai nor dharun ta parun.....

Vakh 20

In a pedagogic vein Lalla Ded exhorts the unwise that right action is neither to decorate the body nor is it to remain engrossed in the bodily affairs. It is not even to ornament the body.

'Dharun' & sandharun' have been picked out for meaning less tampering. 'Dharun' is changed into 'darun' - not to get defeated & 'sandharun' into 'dehsanz-ravun' - to get liberated from body ornamentation. Far-fetched & cynical !

Avestar pothyan Chi ha Mali Paran.....

Vakh 38

Prof. Koul's vakh begins with the word 'avestar' meaning foolish or those not given to read between the lines. Prof. Parimoo's Vakh carries 'avyachar' in place of 'avestar' and the word implies foolish or thoughtless. Without resorting to her innovative method of splitting a word, Bimla ji retains 'avechar' in her version of the vakh.

As per her reflex act she forks out two words 'dava' and 'paran' and twists them into 'dyon' & 'paran'. 'zaldava' is archaic in form and 'zaldyon' is a later formation. Then, her replacement of the word 'paran' by 'paran' is ridiculous. Bhagvatgita as a divine book is to be read, not to decorate oneself with. Books are objects of study and not objects for decoration.

She has left the word 'aham' in the vakh untouched, but in a different vakh she has mutated it into'ham'. why ? 'Aham' is a prominent word in Shaiva thought & has oft been used in many a context.

Like a number of Lalla Ded vakhs the said-vakh has two versions. What Bimla ji has done is the addition of two lines as

are found in Prof. Parimoo's version of the vakh to her version thereby making it six-lined monstrosity of a vakh. What textual criticism as a craft teaches is to place the different versions as they are without making a mix or re-mix of them.

Pota Zooni Vathith mot bolnovum.....

Vakh 39

It is a brilliant vakh pulsating with a sense of yearning & emotion of love. It carries an imprint of poignancy & yearning to meet with her Lord and be in an ever-lasting bond of unicity. 'Lal' is her own self which through yogic praxes she is awakening assiduously & liltingly.

Bimla ji has ineptly foraged into this glittering vakh & distorted it to mar its poetical beauty & lyricism.

She has picked out 'mot-bolnovum' and hacked it for a construction that is a sheer monstrosity. Highly expressive & emotionally charged 'mot-bolnovum' is mutated into 'man bodh novum', & Dr. Koul translating it as 'cleansed her mind & intellect'. Poor and pathetic !

She has also chosen to delete 'tas' as is beautifully woven into the texture of the line and added 'man pran' only to satisfy her vagrant mind suffused with cynicism. 'man' has relevance, 'pran' is an imposition & tinsel accretion.

Dama dama kormus daman hale.....

Vakh 31

The vakh is illustrative of Lalla Ded's yogic praxis and a comprehensive understanding of her intrinsic nature dawning upon her. Bimla ji has replaced 'dama dama kormus' by 'damhah dommus' ignoring readings in different versions of the vakh. Prof. Koul's reading contains 'damahdam' and Prof. Parimoo's and Dr. Grierson's readings are identical. Where-from does the word 'dommus' come ? Words cannot be added to the text of

the vakh out of sheer waywardness. It is not warranted by the methodology of textual criticism. Replacement must have a base supplied by readings of the same vakh available in different versions and has to be integral to the vakh.

Then the introduction of the word 'dommus' into the text of the vakh is not warranted as it underlines force and vigour for suppression of breathing processes. Lalla Ded in the vakh is for sublimation of the breathing process, not for its suppression. 'Inhalation-exhalation' in Shaiva yoga has different purpose from that of Patanjali yoga. Read, Pratibhijna Hridyam by Khemraj, an erudite scholar of indigenous Shaiva thought and she will come to learn what he has to say about pranayam. Bimla ji has replaced 'gati' by 'guthi' & her explanation for replacement is ridiculous. In the entire annals of Hindu Mysticism 'ghat' for human body is staple. Lalla Ded knows the efficacy of human body as the basic resource to find Shiva. 'ghat ghat mei Ram samayo' is a well-known verse.

In the translation of the said-vakh Prof. Parimoo conveys that the lamp of Lalla's self got lit-up and she realised her 'self', the real one & the light sparkled out. In the encompassing darkness she gripped the gem of her 'self' and never let Him go. What a translation and what an understanding ! It exposes Bimla Ji's unformed and uncultivated mind to smithereens.

Yava taar chali tim ambar hyata.....

Vakh 08

This is the vakh that establishes Lalla Ded as a poet of gentle moderation, advocating the use of clothes for safe-guarding the body from cold & wind disasters. She also exhorts the aspirants to 'introspect', otherwise they might miss the inherent meaning & purpose of life in the world.

Here in the vakh Bimla Raina has chosen 'bochi' & 'chali'

for linguistic tyrannies. She has replaced 'bochi' by 'kyod' and 'chali' by 'gali'. Why ? She has not explained. 'Bochi' is a Kashmiri word drawn from Sanskrit word 'Bubuksha' & 'kyod' is another Kashmiri word drawn from Sanskrit word Kyuda. Why replace boche by 'Kyod' when 'bochi' is aptly placed in the texture of the vakh. Then it is no longer her innovative bout as Dr. Grierson and Prof. Parimoo have given 'kyod' in the readings of the said-vakh.

Her innovation lies in the usage of 'gali' for 'chali'. She is absolutely ignorant of 'bochi chalyan' in our daily concourse & 'bochi chalyan' never means 'bochi galyan'. The former expression means to eat to satiate hunger at a particular point of time. 'Bochi galyan' means its total suppression or extinction. Lalla Ded was not for suppression of hunger as is amply clear from the tenor of the said-vakh.

The last line of the vakh has various versions conveying the same import. But Bimla Raina's re-construction of the line is sheer absurdity. It puts that 'mind has to think what body is feeling or experiencing.' It is understandable to the genius of Bimla Ji only. The Hindi translation of the Vakh is strange and mind -boggling.

Pawan purith yus ant vage.....

Vakh 09

Bimla Raina has been kind enough to leave the vakh almost untouched. Yet to win kudos from her patrons she has picked out 'anta' for crucifixion. The word 'anta' is of Sanskritic origins & means 'an end', 'last of all' or 'in the final analysis'. But, to Bimla ji, it is 'anti' meaning inside. Be it told that the entire yogic praxis is an internal affair, an affair of the mind. The word 'anta' is placed in its proper context & conveys that what it does as per its context.

Achayan Aai to gachan gache.....

Vakh 13

The vakh has incessant cycle of birth & death of a mortal as its main theme. It also sets the destination of a man to return to and be an integral part of ultimate source of life. 'Kenh nata kenh' is the metaphorical expression denoting the ultimate source of Reality.

Bimla ji has failed to grasp the pith of the vakh when she twists 'turi' into 'turya'. How can 'turi' be 'turya'? Mortals have not to go to the state of 'turya' as the source of life & universe. It is Param Shiva who is the ultimate source of life and universe. 'Turya' is the fourth psychological state that a yogi has to pass through and if he comes to the state of 'turyateet', he requires Shiva's grace for ultimate upliftment & mergence into Him as the ultimate Reality.

She has split up 'yoria aayi' into 'yava rayi aayi' for redundant meaning. She should have thought if 'rai' as a word could be in the word-hoard of Lalla Ded. The word has different origins. Then, the whole exercise is futile as it is not in sync with the innate soul of the vakh.

The last line is so lofty & pregnant with meaning that any change in any word of the vakh renders it mutilated & incapacitated. The change of 'nata' & 'kyah' into 'huta' and 'kyat' is fanciful & childish.

Before using her pen for a change in the last line she should have carefully mulled that Prof. Koul's & Prof. Parmoo's version of the line is identical. Even Pt. G. N. Raina's & Pt. Nila Kanth Kotru's reading of the line is no different. What impels her to effect the change ? Not understandable.

Chandan loosas pani panas.....

Vakh 18

Here in the vakh Bimla Raina has picked out 'loosas', 'althan' and 'bara bara bana' for split & demolition. 'Loosas' is broken up into 'lah achus', far-fetched & irrelevant, 'althan' is changed into 'aalithan', reflective of her gross ignorance & 'bara bara' is mutated into 'bari bore', a squirming de-construction.

'Loosas' has sufficiency of meaning underlining her exhaustion during the arduous struggle to discover her real self. 'althan' means a tavern, where people drink for pleasure. 'Al' in Sanskrit means 'wine'. Here in the said-vakh it is the abode of Nectar, Sahasrar, the abode of Shiva. It can never be 'aali than', 'ol' is the kashmiri variant of Sanskrit word 'aalaya', nest in English. 'Bari bore', a laboured version of 'bari bari bana', has no relevance to the tavern where aspirants, if set on track, go in earnestness to drink cupfuls of wine, nectar, spiritual Nectar or wine. Lalla draws an optimistic picture for aspirants that they do have to put in stressful and arduous struggle for the quest within, but they as a result will enjoy the unique privilege of drinking the spiritual wine in chalices brimming to the hilt.

Aayas vate gayas na vate .....

Vakh 21

The vakh oozes out a sense of desperation & despair. Lalla Ded had descended direct from Shiva's Abode, but was not sure of the road-way that would lead her back to the same Abode.

She has picked out 'Suman' and 'Swath' for tinkering. Suman is drawn from 'seeman, a sanskrit word in origins and over a period of time got metamorphosed into 'sum' as is in vogue in common parlance. 'Swath' is a kashmiri word drawn from 'Setu', a Sanskrit word in origins. 'Suman swathi manz' denotes an embankment over which stood a 'setu', a bridge. It was there in the midst of the bridge over the embankment that Lalla Ded found the daylight fading because of the setting sun. It is her experience when she was groping in darkness and had

not found a preceptor who was a perfect soul capable of initiating her in the Shaivite praxes & canon. Bimla ji has changed 'loosum' into 'losi', something happening in future. No, it is Lalla's experience when she was in ardent quest and had lived the moment. 'Har' though an ordinary word, is so aptly placed that it conveys a wealth of meaning in the sense of 'spiritual wealth or merit'. Another variant of 'har' is 'Hara' who is Lord Shiva Himself & Prof. Parimoo has dwelt upon its meaning after the manner of a great scholar on Lalla Ded.

Aayas Kami deesha tà Kami Vate.....

Vakh 23

The readings of the vakh are almost identical in the versions of Prof. J.L. Koul, Dr. Grierson, Prof. B.N. Parimoo, Pt. Gopi Nath Raina and Pt. Nila Kanth Kotru.

In this vakh Lalla Ded has alluded to the two theoretical concepts of 'avarohan' and 'aarohan' - descent & ascent. Had Bimla Raina known it, she would not have whimsically tampered with the words that are aptly placed in the vakh.

To tamper with the text she has dragged 'kawas rozun' as a replacement for 'kava', meaning 'how' or what manner. How is it relevant ? Does it in any way light up the thought Lalla Ded aspires to express ? Bimla Raina does not weigh the words and their intrinsic relevance and worth when she chooses to introduce them in the text of the vakhs.

'Kanch' & 'Kanh' are two variants that have been in parlance at various stages of linguistic evolution. But Bimla ji's replacement as 'kanchun' is the kashmiri variant of Sankrit-word 'Kanksha' meaning desire or wish. It tantamounts to the total mutilation of the vakh through the stipulated changes.

The third line of the said-vakh is from an alternate reading of it as given by Dr. Grierson. When there is a total agreement

among the Lalla Ded scholars on the first variant of it, the alternate reading can be put but does not eliminate the original one.

Ban gol tai prakash aava zoone.....

Vakh 25

Bhan, chander, chitta and bhur, bhuva and swaha, all have special meanings in the yogic glossary.

'Bhan' means the sun and is drawn from Sanskrit word, 'bhanu'. In the yoga terminology it is the microcosmic sun, which has twelve digits and throws its rays upwards through the Pingla on the right side of the yogic body suffusing the entire structure. 'Chander' is the 'Chandrama' which is the microcosmic Moon lying at the apex of the vertebral column. It has 8 or 12 digits, perennially exuding nectar, amrit, flowing down through Ida on the left side of the yogic body for sustenance and nourishment of the internal frame.

As per Khemraj, Bhanu and Chander are pran and apan which need sublimation for spiritual rise and flight.

'Chitta' is the limited form of 'Chitti', an infinite consciousness, the same as Shiva. ' Chitta' denotes the waves of thought, its various shades ever disturbing the human mind.

Out of sheer ignorance of the sublime thought that had nourished and cultivated Lalla's cerebral potentialities, Bimla Raina, to the consternation of all Lalla Ded lovers, has demolished 'ban' and its ruined remnants are 'ba van,' which, to her is ' mei ka bodh,' her feeling of physical existence. It is incredible non-sense. Then, she demolishes a known word ' Chander' into 'Cha andur,' again meaning 'mei ka bodh'. It is repulsive non-sense doubled.

Bhur, Bhuvah and Swaha are known as ' Vyahrities' in the

Indian thought. 'Vyahrities' are translated into English as 'interjections'.

What Lalla Ded conveys is that the sun melted away, the moon vanished, consciousness dissolved, there remained nothing , which means ' Shunya', the principle of vacuity, which is Shiva or Supreme consciousness. And in this state the three vyahrities, the earth, the sky and the nether world too departed, 'vyasarjith'.

Bimla ji has botched up the whole vakh, topsy-turvying and demolishing the words and their profound meanings.

Aayas ti syaduy ta gacha ti syaduy.....

Vakh 26

This vakh expresses the rock-bottomed faith of Lalla Ded that she is sure to return to the source of Shiva where-from she has directly descended. Ignorant of methodology of textual criticism and the language of Sanskrit, Bimla Raina has lifted the word ' agrai' for a monstrous mutilation . To her, 'agrai' is ' agarai' if in English and then she feels satisfied with the import of the Vakh.

'Agrai' is a Kashmiri word drawn from Sanskrit word 'agra' wich means source or beforehand. The word as such in the text of the vakh is appropriately placed and conveys its full import in total integration with the texture of the vakh. The change is fruitlessly effected without checking whether 'agaria', if, could be a word in the vocabulary of the times Lalla Ded had lived. For 'agar' her word is 'yudvai' or 'yud' which is directly drawn form Sanskrit word ' yadi' and if 'vai' is added to it, it becomes ' yudvai' in Kashmiri.

Her another change is based on gender. She thinks that 'vyazai' is gender-wise apter than ' vyaduy'. But this change we already find in the reading of the vakh as given by Prof. Parimoo.

I feel that a wise critic would not look for such changes in the texture of vakh couching poetry, which is lofty in content and expressive in vocabulary.

In the glossary part of the vakh ' vyandun' is translated as 'chahna', to wish, to desire,.But, it is not so. ' Vyandun' is drawn from Sanskrit root ' vid' which means ' to know'.

Nath na pan na par zonum.....

Vakh 27

In this vakh Bimla Raina has spotted ' Sadai' for her interference. 'Sadia' is drawn from Sanskrit word ' Sadaiva, meaning ' always'. 'Sadia' is now archaic and has fallen out of use. People who have nodding acquaintance with Lalla Ded do understand that ' sadia' is Sadiva', ' always' in English

Laz kasi sheet nivari.....

Vakh 78

The said-vakh is manifest in its content and vocabulary. But, Bimla ji has wittingly destroyed it beyond conceivable limits. The essential spirit of the vakh is against animal killing.

She has plucked ' bata' and ' vats' from the text for de-construction and subsequent replacement. ' Hoota bata' to her genius, is ' yuth haba hatha'.

The change evokes derisive laughter and is nothing but mockery of a change. It destroys the text of the vakh which is crystal clear in its import. Lalla Ded exhorts the foolish Bhatta, a pandit, to desist from offering a pulsating and harmless animal, though useful to man, at the altar of a stone, devoid of life and sensation. ' Acheetan vats' is sufficiently clear to convey its import. But, to invest it with a lousy garb of ' acheetan hath' is catastrophic and kills the soul of the vakh.

A mind that is devious in approach and premis gets exposed when in the explanatory notes it is written that ' hoota Bhatta'

has to be broken up as it does not address all sections of the kashmiri populace. It is of prime importance to know that Bhattas (Pandits) were the only people living in the valley when Lall Ded trod upon the soil of Kashmir. It is a fact that conversions had gained momentum, but the neo-converts were on the border –line and had not distanced away from their cultural and civilisational inheritance.

Chuy deeva gartas ta dharti srazak.....

Vakh 79

The vakh underlines Shiva as the creator of life on the earth. Though soundless, yet his sound has all immanence. Such a God needs no proof to establish His existence.

The word ' srazakh' is from a Sanskrit word ' srajak', one who creates. The word srajak is replaced by the word 'satraj aakh' which is pure hogwash. How can ' dharti' be changed into 'darith' and ' srajak' into 'satraj aakh'? The meanings of the words in the vakh are quite lucid and do convey the potentiality of Shiva as the creator.Nothing in the vakh hints at the veiling of the Lord for an act of creation.

To be precise, in Shaiva non-dualism of Kashmir creation means manifestation or emanation. The manifested thing is already within Shiva, which He wills to manifest. He manifests Himself to Himself.

The replacement of the weighty word ' srajak' by 'satrajaakh' is dubious too. Only dim-witted can think that Lalla Ded could have used the unusual and unknown word 'satar' when she had a tremendous word-hoard at her disposal to express the self-veiling act of Shiva. Lalla had a cultured mind glued to her own valued treasure-trove of inheritance.

Samsar nom tava tachai.....

Vakh 75

The changes that have been stipulated in the vakh are in no way valid.

'Nom', ' namya', exactly as 'nam' is a sound word contextually placed. Why change it by ' nava' which is its Kashmiri variant?

The second line of the quartet is in perfect order. The world as a blazing pan burns for those who are under the thick veil of forgetfulness, taking not-self as their essential self. 'Mood' in Shaiva parlance denotes a ' sakalakal', one totally enmeshed in the duality of the world. The blazing fire that heats up the world-pan comprises anger, attachment, greed and immoderate sex. The enmeshed souls are lacking in personal discernment and suffering from non-availability of a perfect preceptor.

Gnan-mudra is the virtue of 'Gnanies' who through it fully comprehend the nature of the balzing world-pan. The Gnan-mudra can be realized through the yogic praxes.

Yihay matri-rup pai diye.....

Vakh 74

The vakh prima facie expresses the varied aspects of a woman, her different roles on the stage of life and world. It is quite an objective pictograph of a woman founded on the multi-dimensional experiences of Lalla Ded as an existing individual. It is graphically delineated in apt words.

What the vakh connotes for thoughtfuls is that 'yihay prakriti'- this very prakriti, the materiality of the world assumes various forms of a mother, wife and killer. Shiva is the lord of the prakriti, its creator, and Maya is His potency and lords it over. In such a situation Shiva is fearful and hence a thoughtful is required to mull over the act of creation of the prakriti by Shiva.

Alongwith this shade of meaning can be juxtaposed another shade which highlights Shiva as kind, generous and merciful. Having known all this about Shiva, a discerning reader and a cultivated critic will not visualise 'kruth' as cruel and merciless. For him 'kruth' will mean ' Shiva is difficult to be accessed or reached'. Dr. Grierson, Dr. S.K. Raina, Pt. G.N. Raina and Prof. J.L. Koul have all appreciated the expression in the same light.

'Shiva chuy kruth' is replaced for the heck of it by an ugly formation ' kiva ishto,' put in Hindi as 'Shiva Kaise Ishta hei". Is the change corroborated by internal or external evidences?

Bhasker Razdan, who has translated sixty vakhs of Lalla Ded into Sanskrit, has translated ' Shiva chuy kruth' into ' kashten sadhyam Shivam'. The critics who are intellectually unfair or at zero donot rummage works on the subject that they treat for vital cues and use them for appropriate evaluation and appreciation.

Rava mata, thali-thali taptyan.....

Vakh 73

The vakh is in the formation of a riddle. The sun and the rain-god, varun, though manifestations of Shiva only, have been vehicled to establish the sweep, immanence and universality of Shiva.

'Thali' and 'luka garan' have been plucked out for demolitional exercise. Prof Koul's reading of the vakh is more accurate as it stresses the sun shining everywhere, on high and low. Dr. Grierson's version carries 'atma-thali' in place of 'thali-thali,' thereby meaning it might shine upon his abode only.But the fact is contrary to it.

But, Bimla ji, a tinsel critic, has coined an unpoetic coinage like 'a-utyam' and smuggled it into the first line of the quartet, perhaps conveying 'ordinary places' as against sacred

lands. 'Looka gara' is an explicit expression and why twist it into 'loktyan garan'? 'Looka gara' conveys all about the varun-god universally showering its sheets of water without any discrimination.

Be it told that any changes that are to be brought about have to be corroborated and evidenced. Nobody's fancy can enjoy a free rein and unbridled play. In the tantrik context 'ravi', which implies 'surya', has the nature of fire that destroys all meshes of duality and 'varun' stands for chandrama which is cool in nature and provides internal joy and mirth and nourishes it to the brim.

'Surya and Varun' as a combination symbolizes ' prakash and vimarsa' in case of 'shambava-upay,' 'Jhan Shakti and kriya shakti' in case of 'shakhto pay' and 'pran shakti and apan shakti' in case of 'Anavopay'.

All the three rise and rest in the 'madhya-nadi' or 'sushumna nadi'.

Shiva gur tai keshav palnas.....

Vakh 06

It is an allegory of a superb order. Shiva is the horse, Keshav (Vishnu) is the saddle and Brahma is the stirrups. Brahma is the creator, Keshav is the preserver and Shiva is the assimilator. In fact, these three gods represent creation, preservation and assimilation, which are the three prime functions of Paramshiva. These three gods are not sovereign, but they act at the behest of Param Shiva and are His agents. As per the allegory Shiva's vehicle is the horse, Keshav's is the saddle and Brahma's is the stirrup.

To further explain the allegory, reference must be made to the Sankhya thought to which the Kashmiri thought of Shaiva non-dualism is indebted for twenty-five tattvas constituting the

materiality of Prakriti. As per Sankhya thought the horse with his saddle and stirrups symbolizes 'satogun', 'tamogun' and rajogun', which are the attributes of Prakriti. Shiva as the assimilator represents 'tamogun,' keshav as the preservator represents 'satogun' and Brahma as the creator represents 'rajogun'. The horse with all its paraphernalia is the 'trigunatmac horse'.

The tradition of weaving allegories with horse as the leitmotif begins with the Upanishads, especially kathopnishad and Shuvetashvetar Upanishad. The allegory woven by Lalla Ded has Shaivite content of creation, preservation and assimilation as its motif but Upanishads had a different purpose for its usage.

Now, let us have a look at Bimla Raina's innovations, all based on word Jugglery.

To destroy the allegory 'gur' derived from 'turag', a Sanskrit word, is twisted into 'gor' after the manner of ' tamasha gor', 'gyawan gor' and 'gindan gor'. Without giving the origin of the word,'gor' it is taken as one who creates and conducts the 'leela' of the world. In the allegory Shiva is taken as one who assimilates (samharak) and not the one who creates.

'Palnas' as put in the allegory is changed into palnas and 'payriyan' is twisted into 'pyryan' denoting as per her 'body metalbolism', all far-fetched and phoney.

'Parzanyas' is altered into 'praz-zanyas'. The reason for the change is given that 'parzanyas' means 'paraya samajana'. It is gross ignorance of the word that has emerged from the basic root ' Jna' getting changed into ' Janati, Janitah, Jananti' when conjugated as per grammatical rules in Sanskrit.

Pari and prati are the prefixes added to the root 'Jna' and various words Jnan, parijnan, paribijnan, pratibignan and pratibijna are formed and zan, parzan, praznav, praznavun etc. are their kashmiri variants emerging after a protracted linguistic

evolution and metamorphosis.

To change ' chadyas' into ' chadyas' is sheer absurdity and heightens the thoughtless violence on the vakh. The spirit of the vakh is that a yogi (atmanya aiva atma tushta) comes to learn about God who rides the 'trigunatmac horse' through His yogic prowess.

It should be rammed home to any ciritc emerging from blue that Brahma as the agency of Param Shiva is the creator and strengthening of body metabolism as has been hinted at does not mean an arduous act of creation (sreshti), which in Shaiva thought means manifestation of the world of objects. The entire stuff of explanations aimed at justification for the alterations are off the track and do not carry conviction.

Bimla Rain has managed to play trick on the said-vakh.But, I believe, she must have felt tremendous difficulty in handling the vakhs like, 'Chyth twarug, gagan brahmvon' and 'Chyath twarug vagi hyath rotum'. That must be the reason to keep the two vakhs out of the purview of her book.

Anahat Kha Swarup shunyalai.....

Vakh 07

This vakh has to be understood as a sequel to the vakh 'Shiva gur tai keshav palnas'

The first-vakh has been totally botched up and it is axiomatic that the vakh that has to be studied as sequel to it shall suffer from grave impairment.

'Anahat', Kha-swarup, shunyalia, aham-vimarsa and nad-bind have philosophical meanings and need be studied and explained in the light of thought Ladda Ded was deeply wedded to.

Nad and Bindu as explained with the help of 'Hindi Sahitya Kosa' by Bimla Raina or her mentor, the translator of the original

Kashmiri version into Hindi, are far from accurate.

Bindu as per the Shaiva lexicon is perfect, undifferentiated, luminous, meta-physical and eternal consciousness Supreme. Nada is the expansion of Bindu for manifestation of what lies inside the Bindu. Bindu is 'prakash' and Nada is 'vimarsa'.Bindu has no types as has been mentioned in the explanatory notes. It has layers of expansion, prasar or visfar, from 'a-kala', chita-kala, to Anand shakti (aa), Iccha-shakti (e,e), Jnan-Shakti (u,u) and Kriya-Shakti (re-ow). In total Bindu as the central luminous and perfect consciousness has eight layers of outer expansion. The expansion is inside the consciousness supreme and not-outside it. In Shaiva thought creation is manifestation or emanation. We see the objective world as a manifestation of that what is inside Param Shiva or consciousness supreme.

Anahat is certainly considered as the fourth station or state in the process of awakening up the Kundalini that lies coiled up in a state of sleep at 'Muladhar'.But,it is not what Lalla Ded means by 'anahat'. To her, 'anahat' has a nexus with Bindu and Nada. In fact, as is put in the vakh, Anahat is 'Pranav',an eternal, unhindered sound, Om. This very 'pranav' when in a state of unity or identity with consciousness supreme or Param Shiva is Bindu and when in expansion or visfar for outward manifestation is Nada.

The entire word-hoard, (Shabada rashi), when lying in a state of total un-differentation from the consciousness supreme (Chitti) is Bindu. But when it expands into various states of gross verbal expression, it is Nada. Hence the unhindered and perpetual sound (Om) is Bindu when in unicity with 'Chitti' and Nada when it evolves into verbal expressions through the stages of pashyanti, madhyama and vaikhuri.

Aham and Vimarsa as prime concepts of philosophical

import for Lalla Ded have equally been messed up because of gross philosophical ignorance. The duo of 'aham and vimarsa' are the same as Bindu/Nada, Pranav in unicity with Param Shiva and in differentiated form of gross verbal expression. ' Aham' is Bindu, Prakash, undifferentiated state of unity and beyond physics and vimarsa is Nada expansion, visfar and manifestation. Aham is undifferneitated 'I, as an inherent stir and vimarsa is differentiated I-ness. This is why 'Aham' is a bija-mantar. Unaware of the subtleties of Shaiva thought. The tinsel critic has changed 'Kha-swarop' into 'Ksa and ha swaroop'.For this some tantric works have been alluded to without giving Lalla Ded readers their titles and publisher's names. Be it told that Kashmir Shaivism is certainly founded on Tantric thought, but those tantras are non –dual tantras, not the tantras that accept Arda-narishwar as a vital concept. To the purists of kashmir Shaiva non-dualism the concept of arda-narishwar is based on dualism which accepts Shiva and Shakti as two separate entities and polarities. They hold that Shiva is Shakti when He wills to manifest Himself to. Himself. Shakti is Shiva's inalienable potency to manifest, expand, and create multiplicity and differentiation.

'Kha-swaroop' is the right word as it denotes Shiva as beyond the relations of time and space. 'Kha' in Sanskrit means 'akash,' sky, etherealty or void. It has direct link with the type of God who will ride over the 'trigun-atmac' horse. Such a God is beyond the world and is Bindu, Prakash and Kha swaroop all transcendental attributes.

'Kha-swaroop' is connected with 'Shunyalai' which as per Shaiva non-dual texts means void, but not the Buddhist void, which is a total vacuity and emptiness. It is a void where-in the objective world lies in a state of absolute mergence in the consciousness supreme (chitti). The word meaning of 'Shuniya'

is 'abhava' which if separated from the prefix of 'a' becomes 'bhava'. 'a' stands for Shiva Kala, Anuttar, Param Shiva and 'bhava' typifies the world of objects. So, Shuniya, as per Lalla Ded, is that state of Shiva's consciousness in which the world of objects lies merged in an undifferentiated and unmanifest form. Such a concept of'Shuniya' is positive as against the negative shade of meaning that Buddhism has invested it with.

Andari ayas chandri garan.....

Vakh 60

The tinkerings with this vakh are just superficial. The second line of this vakh begins with the word 'garan' in the readings of the line as are found in the versions of Prof. B.N. Parimoo, Dr. Grierson, Dr. S.K. Raina, Pt. G.N.Raina and Pt. Nila Kanth Kotru. The sole exception is the version of Prof. J.L.Koul, who gives the word 'charan', which exactly is the meaning of the word 'garan'.

The replacement conceived by Bimla Raina is 'gwaran', as per her, an Arabic word, drawn form 'ghour'with Hindi meanings of 'manan, chintan, dhyan.....'

Two cheers for her! She knows Arabic too.

The change is scandalous. Lalla Ded has no such word in her repertoire. Arabic was an unknown language during the period she lived and wove her poetry. It was Zain-ul-abidin who changed the language of the court, which was Sanskrit, by an alien language called Persian at the persistent prodding of foreign missionaries in Kashmir dominating his court. A poor student of History, called Bimla Raina, should not stoop to the abysmal level of thoughtlessness only to earn derision and revulsion.

The word 'garan' is the rightword as it is available in all versions of the vakh. It is an indigenous word, musical, oft used

by Lalla Ded to shape her mystical feelings. Then, mischievously other versions of the same vakh have not been reproduced as has been the case with other vakhs. If 'garan' is appropriately placed in the first line, how come it loses its appropriateness in the second line. Poets repeat a word or a line for emphasis or for highlighting a special meaning. Shakespeare has repeapted 'and' three times to ram in his point. Arabic like other Semitic languages is so stiff-boned that 'ghour' if Arabic can never get shaped into 'gwaran'. Semitic languages like the Semitic logic are rock-hard and non-malleable.

The word 'Chandray' has been broken up into 'cha andrai'. It is crude and disgusting. In Shaiva yoga 'Chandrama' is taken for 'apanvayu' rising from outer dwadashant. During this process of inhaling 'chitta', mind, limited form of 'chitti', also goes inwards. 'Chitta' represents a collectivity of the outer world of objects, called in proper terminology as 'ghat, pat, neel, sukh' et al. Hence, Chandrama as in Shaiva yoga is accepted as the world of multiple objects.

Now, Lalla Ded through this illustrious vakh conveys that while practising 'pran-apan' process she attained a state of interiorisation of outer world of material objects, in fact, she sucked it up into her 'swarup', intrinsic nature. She also sensed a condition of 'saksatkar', communion of the objective world outside her with her own intrinsic consciousness. As a result for her as a yogini everything in her mind and that what is outside her in the world of objects, all is drenched in the exalted consciousness of Shiva. This condition is known in Shaiva parlance as 'Bhairav mudra'. Some name it as 'Jagdanand'.

The vakh is suffused with the Shaivite matter, but as result of her catholicity she has used 'Naran', Narayan, Vishnu, as the focal god, not shiva because all gods for her are potencies of

Paramshiva, who is essentially responsible for the multiplicity of this world and all forms of differentiation which we as subjects witness all around us.

Ajapa gayatri hamsa hamsa zapith.....

Vakh 59

The word 'hamsa' has been exposited variously in the texts of Shaivagamas. The bija mantra of 'hamsa' is 'ahamsah'. 'aham' is the divine will of Param Shiva and 'Ṣah' is the divine cognition of Him. 'aham' is taken as 'pran' and 'sah' is taken as 'apan'. There is an incessant conflict going on between 'pran' and 'apan'and the real yogis alone have the capacity to overcome the roaring conflict with the aid of their volitional power. The 'Tantralok vivek' draws a graphic picture of the conflict between 'pran' and 'apan'

'Hamsah' as a bija mantra is uttered continuously till the stir (spanda) of vimarsha of the real self (swarup) is awakened. The mantra is to be internalised and must lead an aspirant to a state where he starts scirring his own pervasion of divine consciousness.

The word 'aham' has been replaced by 'ham'. Why? 'Ham' emerges with the drop of 'a' sound due to regular and uninterrupted utterance of the whole mantra. When Lalla Ded refers to giving up 'aham', she means to convey that the mindset of taking not-self as self has to be abandoned. And in Kashmir Shaiva thought it is called 'avidya' or 'Ajnan'. The awareness of self-pride (gamand) in the elucidatory notes is not the point Lalla Ded has put across. 'I-ness' in an individual has come to him from Shiva only. But, it is limited 'I-ness'. It has to outgrow its limitations to attain identity with the Supreme consciousness of Shiva where it gets totally submerged and remains in an undifferentiated form. The evolution of an individual from his

limited I-ness to attain indentification with the consciousness of Shiva (chitti) is the value.

Tanthar gali tai manther moche.....

Vakh 65

The vakh branded Bimla Raina, is moulded on the pattern as is available in Dr. Grierson's Lalla –Vakyani. The other versions of the vakh as are available in the collections of Prof. J.L.Koul, Prof. B.N.Parimoo, Pt. Gopi Nath Raina, Dr. S.K.Raina and Pt. N.K. Kotru have been totally left out and ignored. How is it that the version of Dr. Grierson is taken as very authentic? His version of the Vakhs has not been taken as base-line to determine the worth and texture of Lalla Ded vakhs in totality. Due to her inherent incapacities to properly elucidate the content of vakhs the vendor of tinsel wares handles them as per her whim and fancifulness. There is no scheme and no methodology involved and no format that could accord her attempt a veneer of schematic approach.

The second line of the vakh stands tinkered with and 'chyath' is dropped for inclusion of 'swapnya', a strange construction interpreted as sahaj jnan, antardreshti and antar Jnan. 'Svapan' in English means dream which as per the seminal Shaiva text, Shiva-Sutra, is 'svapno vikalpah'. When interpreted, Vikalpah means internal perceptions and thoughts. Mind of a man remains under persistent disturbance and confusion because of these currents and cross- currents of perceptions and thoughts. It is the condition of human mind in the state of wakefulness and continues to be the same during the state of dreaming. The projection of dreaming state, svapnya, to Bimla Ji as the state of intuition, Sahaj Jnan or antar jnan is monstrously and brazenly wrong.

The word that is apposite to the context is 'Chyath,' Chitta,

derived from 'Chitti', infinite consciousness supreme. ' Chitta'. in modern parlance, is mind, a store-house of thoughts and perceptions. When it ceases to be, nothing remains. It is the state of 'Turya', the state of Bhairav, suffused with total God-consciousness.

To quote Svacchanda Tantra

'Keeping the activity of the mind apart, one must unite, that activity in God-Consciousness. Then this bound limited being (pasu) will realize the state of Shiva and be liberated'.

Bimla Raina bound within the cocoon of her limited knowledge and range has declared 'Shunyas shunya meelith gav' as an interpolation made by some Lalla Ded scholars.

But, contrary to it, the fact remains that the line is absolutely germane to the whole tenor and content of the vakh.

'Shunya', to Lall Ded, is the sadak who has succeeded in calming down his 'chit', sum total of perceptions and thoughts and is in the state of 'turya', suffused with Bhairav consciousness and is merged in it.

'Shunya', therefore, is the person who has attained a loftiness of spiritual nature and is in ecstasy of consciousness known as 'Chitta chamatkar'.

'Shunyas' is the consciousness supreme or Param Shiva, in whom the world of objects remains submerged in an undifferentiated form. It is not the Buddhist 'shunya' which is total vacuity, emptiness or void. It is the principle of all objects remaining in dilution and submergence within Shiva's consciousness. Hence 'shunyas' refers to Param Shiva, who is a void, but the world of objects remains in a state of non-differentiation within Him. His state is both void and not-void.

To quote a Shaiva-Shastra

Ashunyam Shunyam iti' ukhtam shunyat cha abhava ishyate!

Abhava satu vijneyo yatra bhava layam gata !!

'Shunyas shunya meelith gava' means the union of an aspirant having attained Bhairav consciousness with the Supreme consciousness of Shiva.

EPILOGUE

Mrs. Bimla Raina's attempt at re-orientatioin of Lalla Ded vakhs is biased and prepossesed. The whole attempt is laboured, far-fetched & does not even minimally add to the honing up of vakhs for better understanding and appreciation. As a poet of tremendous originality Lalla Ded cannot be imposed with meanings that belie her own indigenous content as expressed in her glittering vakhs. As a witness to horrible & volatile developments in her native place she exhorted the foreign Islamists working under the garb of Sufism and mis-using religion to see God's essence in all men of all faiths without discriminating one human being from the other on the basis of religion. Lalla Ded's thunder remains and has gained more relevance in present day Kashmir reduced to a veritable hell by crazed crusaders & religious fanatics.

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11. Lalla Ded - Prof. R.N. Koul
12. Siva-Sutra - Vasugupta
13. Pritibijna Hrdyam - Khemraj
14. Pandit Sarwanand Chiragi (Urdu Translations)

CHANGES THAT BIMLA RAINA HAS EXECUTED

originals	Replacements
amipana	Oma pana
Jin	yā zi
bhava ruja	bhava ṛaj
vachun	vakhchun
nangai	nihangai
divar vatā	dehvar vatā
pyatha buan	shuniya & earth
hoota batā	hụta bā hathā
al, pal, vakhur	gar kee samgree (Hindi Translation)
kān	kād
vanun	woni na yun
kol & akol	vakhat, be-vakhat (Hindi Translation)
vakh, manas	mansik japa (Hindi Translation)
asi	a-oose
samahan	samtahan
vokshun	voha-akhyun
kahan	kohan
abakh chyan	abodi chyan
rāzdane	rāsdwaney
tirath ros	titha rasi
māli	moal
zānhā	zān yee hā
kruth	kiva ishto (Hindi Translation)
parān (read)	ṗaran (decorate)
zaldava	zaldyon
mot-bolnovum	mann bodhi novum
milith tas mann	milvith mann pran
dama dama kormas	damaha dommus

gati	guthi
chentan dih vankavan	chenta dehas vyan kyah von
anta	anṭi
yorai ayi	yava rayi ayi
ṭuri	turiya
nata & kyah	huta & kyat
loosas	lah achus
althān	aalithān
ḅara ḅara	bari bore
loosum	losi
suman swathe	sum na swathe
ḅhān	ba van
chandar	cha ondur
agrai	agar ai
sadai	sadiva
batā	yuth habā hathā
dharti	darith
srazak	satraz aakh
nom	nav
yihai	shivai
kruth	kiva ishto
thali-thali	a - utyam thali
luka gari	ḷoktyan garan
gur	gor
palnas	pālnas
ashvawār	ath savār
kha-swaroop	ksha & h swaroop
chandrai	cha-andrai
gārān	gwārān (Arabic)
aham	ham
chyath	swapnya